

Superintendent's Report
Parks and Seattle Center Committee
May 20, 2011

Budget Schedule. Recently, Mayor McGinn sent out a letter providing information on some options he is exploring to find efficiencies in how the City operates some services and programs. In this letter, the Mayor asked most departments (including Parks) to reduce their General Fund dependence by 4% - 8%. Since the 2012 Endorsed Budget included \$84.1 million of General Fund support for Parks, this represents a reduction of between \$3.4 and \$6.7 million in the 2012 budget. We presented our mid-year 2011 cut proposal to the Mayor at the end of April. We are working hard to identify cuts that have the smallest possible impact on services to the public, but at this level of reductions, there will be impacts to the public and to our employees.

Volunteers. Parks and recreation staff supported 43,768 volunteers in providing 360,698 hours of service. Volunteer hours increased 33,932 over 2009, but total volunteers are down- a drop in 2,000 youth. (Still youth make up 35% of our total volunteer corps, which is more than twice their share of the population!) Lifelong Learning and Golf increased the hours total through better data collection; in the Green Seattle Partnership acreage, service, and volunteers increased. Volunteer hours in parks for the second year are down, but volunteers are up. We are assessing the need to help Baby Boomer become volunteers, or volunteer more hours; and we are working to recruit younger technologically savvy volunteers.

Earth Month: Everyday is Earth Day for the month of April 2011. Parks hosted 126 work parties in honor of Earth Day (month), involving more than 6,000 volunteers contributing more than 24,000 hours. Parks staff supervised, supported, planned, delivered materials and tools, developed partnerships and hosted many new volunteers.

Athletic Field Coordinators. The Athletic Field Coordinators are working closely with Parks facilities staff to prepare the new field boxes for installation. There will be 80 new field boxes installed at various fields; the boxes will serve as storage spaces for supplies and manual equipment for user volunteers to prepare the fields for play. It is part of a larger effort that allows volunteers to help us prepare our 189 fields for sports leagues. Because of budget cuts in the past few years, we no longer have adequate staffing to get this job done with paid employees.

Environmental Education Summit. In partnership with the IslandWood and the Seward Park Environmental and Audubon Center, Seattle Parks and Recreation hosted the first Environmental Education Summit on Friday, April 29th, at the Northwest African American Museum. About 100 environmental educators from various community based organizations in the King County area, and other city departments attended. The focus on the summit was to find efficiencies in delivering environmental education to youth in a time of diminishing budgets. Dean Lisa Graumlich of the University of Washington's College of the Environment spoke during lunch about the role of environmental education in the lives of our youth, the ethic of social justice and the values of access and inclusion.

Next Steps:

- Create and maintain a supportive network of individuals, organization and communities involved in environmental education.
- Identify service gaps.
- Leverage partnerships to expand and enhance services lost in budget reductions.

- Explore ways to increase culturally relevant programs that provide connections to nature and environmental education for persons of color, immigrants, refugees and other underserved populations.

Parks Naming Update. The process for submitting naming suggestions for Thornton Creek Park #1, #2, #6, the Ravenna Avenue site on Thornton Creek and the park located at 12th Ave. and E. James Court closed last week. The naming committee will meet next week and forward on their recommendations, to me, for these park sites.

Rob Dyrdek Foundation Donation. A planned skatespot at Roxhill Park in West Seattle received a \$75,000 donation from the Rob Dyrdek Foundation recently. The Foundation intends to donate up to \$50,000 for design work, and \$25,000 toward construction of a skateboard area in the park at 9244 29th Ave. SW. The 2008 Parks and Green Space Levy allocates \$600,000 for planning, design and construction of the Roxhill skatespot. It is expected to be completed in 2012. Dyrdek is a professional skateboarder and MTV reality show star.

Skate Park Update.

Skateparks Now Open	Skateparks in the Planning or Construction Phase
Ballard Commons Park	Crown Hill Park (fall 2011)
Dahl Playfield	Delridge Playfield (winter 2011)
Lower Woodland Park	Hubbard Homestead (Phase 2, not funded)
Summit Slope	Jefferson (fall 2011)
	Judkins (fall 2012)
	Roxhill (2012)

Park Openings. Over the last few weeks we have celebrated the opening of several new parks. This includes Hubbard Homestead Park, Myrtle Reservoir Park, Thomas C. Wales Park and Summit Slope Park.

Adult softball. Citywide Athletics staff are developing schedules for the 24 adult softball leagues. This year there are more than 200 teams and more than 3,000 adult participants participating in the women's, men's and co-ed leagues throughout the city. They are also working on Ballfield Attendant recruitment, hiring and training for the 24 leagues. League play begins this month.

April Pools Day. Nearly 500 people participated in April Pools day events at Seattle pools. These events emphasized all aspects of water safety. Sponsors provided food and small gifts. This event is a regular spring feature at Seattle Pools.

Seasonal Concessions. Partnerships staff have informed all seasonal concessions winners of their awards and generated permits. Vendors are now returning support documents, filing applications with appropriate historic review boards, etc. Most will begin vending this month.

Queen Anne Community Center. There is interest in the Queen Anne community in raising funds to expand the hours. They need to raise \$45,000, and in the first several weeks of fundraising efforts have raised \$900.

Hat 'n' Boots. The Hat 'n' Boots project at Oxbow Park in Georgetown received an award from Historic Seattle for Community Partnership for Historic Preservation.

Washington Park Arboretum - New Zealand Focal Forest. Design is complete. Construction will begin in the summer of 2012. In preparation, we will remove a number of trees over the next 18 months, to be replaced at a rate far greater than 2:1. We will hold a public meeting later this spring to give an update on the implementation of the Arboretum Master Plan and highlighting this project.

Jefferson Park Beacon Mountain. This is a community initiated project funded in part by the 2008 Parks and Green Spaces Levy; it is intended to be an ecologically oriented playscape in Jefferson Park. The Mountain is envisioned as a climbable collection of slopes and boulders with on-grade slides. A "park-sized sprinkler" for summer cooling and fun will figure prominently as part of a water exploration zone. Working with City Light, Parks will combine this project with construction of picnic shelters that have solar panels as rooftops. The solar energy would go into Seattle City Light's electric grid. As with all grid-tied energy sources, the electrons will be used by the nearest load (meaning it will help power the park's lights and maybe the community center). Essentially, this means less energy from traditional sources brought in to meet the local demand. 100% Construction documents are complete. Permits associated with the project are still under review by Public Health – Seattle & King County.